

Last week:

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- “Will I believe the Gospel today?”
- Why IS it so hard to believe?

# Previously

Jesus delegates  
this proclamation  
and sending to his  
disciples

Luke 9:1-6 (NRSV)

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

Herod, represents us  
as being confused and  
distorted by his heart  
curved inward

Luke 9:7-9 (NRSV)

Now Herod the ruler heard about all that had taken place, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the ancient prophets had arisen. Herod said, "John I beheaded; but who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he tried to see him.

# Jesus feeds the 5000

Isaiah 25:6-9 (NRSV)

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,  
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.

And he will destroy on this mountain  
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,  
the sheet that is spread over all nations;  
he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,  
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,  
for the Lord has spoken.

It will be said on that day,

Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.

This is the Lord for whom we have waited;

let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

# So far in Luke...

- Bring 2 people back from the dead
- Heal numerous people, drive out demons
- Still a storm!
- Multiply a few loaves and fishes to feed a group the size of a King's sell-out game at Arco Arena

# Jesus has

- Delegated his mission and message of the end of the age of decay to his disciples but still when he invited them to feed the multitude they backed away without faith.

# What was he praying for?

Luke 9:18 (NRSV)

Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”

# It was not enough that

- The Son of God spoke directly to them
- The Son of God did miracles before them
- The Son of God lived together with them
- The Son of God delegated mission and power to them

He's praying that they start to  
"get it"!

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## Luke 9:18-19 (NRSV)

Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" They answered, "John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen."

# Recognize this?

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# Conventional wisdom

“Jesus, you are a teacher with power who has come to encourage, to bring a temporary deliverance and moral improvement to the people just like the whole long string of prophets before you.”

## Luke 9:18-21 (NRSV)

Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" They answered, "John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "The Messiah of God." He sternly ordered and commanded them not to tell anyone,

# This is confusing

- He comes, but why does he hide?
- He says he's come to do this amazing, permanent, final deliverance, but he swears his disciples to secrecy
- Peter gets the answer right, but Jesus says "you have to keep it to yourself."

Why not?

**HELLO**

my name is

*Jesus*

*Messiah of God*

# We start down this road, and once we do...

- He'll do something about all of THOSE people that someone needs to do something about...
- He'll fix all **our problems** (the things WE identify as problems)
- He'll make us happy by changing our situation (because the reason we assume we're not happy or not performing well is our externals)

# What Jesus has to do

- Save the universe from this age of decay
- BY saving the stewards of this universe (us, image bearers of God) from their hearts curved in on themselves

How are the two connected?

# How are the two connected?

- We were created to derive receive our life, our identity from God and to use this life in ruling service of God's creation
- In our rebellion we turn from God and try to receive our life from ourselves or the creation in service to ourselves
  - Our hearts curved in on themselves

## Romans 8:19-23 (NRSV)

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

# The end of the age of rebellion and decay is NOT God just taking the world from US

Luke 9:20-22 (NRSV)

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "The Messiah of God." He sternly ordered and commanded them not to tell anyone, saying, "The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

# God himself becomes the victim of our rebellion

Luke 9:20-22 (NRSV)

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# Jesus ramps up the contrast

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We all assume this savior will do his saving at the expense of the lives of his enemies. There is Old Testament precedent for it. In the Exodus, where God saves his people from bondage to the Egyptians God rescues them at the cost of the first born of the Egyptians but spares the first born of Israel. Now instead, for the ultimate salvation, not the samples, not the hints, not the symbols, God himself is going to have his own son killed. God himself will be humanity's willing victim.

## Luke 9:23-27 (NRSV)

Then he said to them all, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. But truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

# The issue is not

- Whether the creator God is powerful
- God could re-create a world without decay but it wouldn't be the world where he could be in it with us, because of our hearts.

# The issue is

- Whether the creator God has invested himself on our behalf

# Why is it hard to believe?

- I wobble between two lies
  - I don't need saving
  - I can save myself

# How does Jesus address it?

- He becomes our innocent victim
  - So we realize how selfish we really are
- He becomes the stand-in for our punishment
  - So we realize how unable we are to save ourselves

# What if I can't?

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# Entering into faith

- We enter in not by trying to save ourselves, but by realizing we can't.
  - The first hopeful sign of addressing our “curve” is recognition of our helplessness

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- We recognize the love in his voluntary helplessness as we feel our involuntary helplessness

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- We enter in not by trying to save ourselves, but by realizing we can't.
- We recognize the love in his voluntary helplessness as we feel our involuntary helplessness
- The surrender, and the love yields generous gratitude